

Pro-Choice Caucus members reiterate support for a woman's right to choose

WASHINGTON – Today, U.S. Representatives Mike Quigley (D-IL) and Jackie Speier (D-CA), both members of the Pro-Choice Caucus, spoke out against new legislation that would ban all abortions in the District of Columbia after twenty weeks, with extremely limited exceptions.

“This bill is nothing more than the latest attack on a woman's right to choose by those who would deny them access to the care they need during what is easily the most difficult decision and most challenging time of their lives,” said **Rep. Quigley**. “The extreme agenda pushed by anti-choice advocates often ignores the fact that, for some women, pregnancy can be extremely dangerous and life threatening for both the mother and the fetus. This is why the twenty week abortion ban introduced today is especially cruel.”

“I am outraged by the continued attacks on women's health and our constitutional right to make crucial decisions about our health and our families,” said **Rep. Speier**. “Congress has no place in the decision making process between a woman and her physician. Women in the District of Columbia should not be treated as second class citizens. Rest assured, my Pro-Choice Caucus colleagues and I will continue to protect the rights of women in the District of Columbia and across the nation.”

The District of Columbia Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, introduced by Congressman Trent Franks (R-AZ), imposes Federal restrictions against women seeking reproductive care in the District of Columbia after twenty weeks of pregnancy. Several states have similar laws, which do not include exceptions for cases of rape and incest, pose a serious threat to women's lives and potentially their ability to have children in the future.

In addition to issues of reproductive freedom, the bill also reignites debate over District of Columbia home rule, which describes the extent to which DC residents are able to govern themselves through the jurisdiction of local elected officials. Under the Home Rule Act of 1973, DC was provided a city council and mayor, but Congress still maintains authority over the city's budget, reviews all legislation passed by the city council before it can become law and can propose and pass legislation for the city without approval or input from local residents or legislators.

"It is a shame that as we celebrate the 39th anniversary of the landmark Roe v. Wade decision, which affirmed the constitutionality of a woman's right to choose, Congressman Trent Franks, who chairs the Subcommittee on the Constitution, would introduce a bill that so clearly denies women their constitutional right to these critical health services," said **Rep. Barbara Lee** (CA-09), also a member of the Pro-Choice Caucus.

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